

EXHIBIT A

1 Diversified Reporting Services, Inc.

2 RPTS CARR

3 HIF084160

4

5

6 DISINFORMATION NATION: SOCIAL MEDIA'S

7 ROLE IN PROMOTING EXTREMISM AND MISINFORMATION

8 Thursday, March 25, 2021

9 House of Representatives,

10 Subcommittee on Communications and Technology,

11 joint with

12 Subcommittee on Consumer Protection and Commerce,

13 Committee on Energy and Commerce,

14 Washington, D.C.

15

16

17

18 The subcommittees met, pursuant to notice, at 12:02

19 p.m., via Webex, Hon. Michael F. Doyle [chairman of the

20 Subcommittee on Communications and Technology] presiding.

21 Present from the Subcommittee on Communications and

22 Technology: Representatives Doyle, McNerney, Clarke, Veasey,

23 McEachin, Soto, O'Halleran, Rice, Eshoo, Butterfield, Matsui,

24 Welch, Cardenas, Kelly, Craig, Fletcher, Pallone (ex

25 officio); Latta, Scalise, Guthrie, Kinzinger, Johnson, Long,

107 before Congress since the deadly attack on the Capitol on
108 January 6th. That event was not just an attack on our
109 democracy and our electoral process, but an attack on every
110 member of this committee and in the Congress.

111 Many of us were on the House floor and in the Capitol
112 when that attack occurred, and we were forced to stop our
113 work of certifying the election and retreat to safety, some
114 of us wearing gas masks and fearing for our lives. We fled
115 as a mob desecrated the Capitol, the House floor, and our
116 democratic process. People died that day, and hundreds were
117 seriously injured.

118 That attack, and movement that motivated it, started and
119 was nourished on your platforms. Your platforms suggested
120 groups for people to join, videos they should view, and posts
121 they should like, driving this movement forward with
122 terrifying speed and efficiency.

123 FBI documents show that many of these individuals used
124 your platforms to plan, recruit, and execute this attack.
125 According to independent research, users on Facebook were
126 exposed 1.1 billion times to misinformation related to the
127 election last year alone despite changes to your policies and
128 claims that you have removed election misinformation.

129 Our Nation is in the middle of a terrible pandemic.
130 Nearly 550,000 Americans have lost their lives to this deadly
131 disease, more than any other country on the planet. And an

132 independent study found that on Facebook alone, that users
133 across five countries, including the United States, were
134 exposed to COVID disinformation an estimated 3.8 billion
135 times, again despite claims of fixes and reforms.

136 And now, as the Biden administration is working to
137 implement the American Rescue Plan and get vaccines in
138 people's arms, we are faced with waves of disinformation on
139 social media about the safety and efficacy of these shots.
140 These vaccines are the best chance we have to fight this
141 virus, and the content that your websites are still
142 promoting, still recommending, and still sharing is one of
143 the biggest reasons people are refusing the vaccine.

144 And things haven't changed. My staff found content on
145 YouTube telling people not to get vaccines, and was
146 recommended to similar videos. The same was true on
147 Instagram, where it was not only easy to find vaccine
148 disinformation, but platforms recommended similar post. The
149 same thing happened on Facebook, except they also had anti-
150 vax groups to suggest as well. And Twitter was no different.
151 If you go to any of these superspreader accounts that remain
152 up despite the policies meant to curb this anti-vax content,
153 you will see this content.

154 Now, understand this. You can take this content down.
155 You can reduce division. You can fix this. But you choose
156 not to. We saw your platforms remove ISIS terrorist content.

236 *Mr. Latta. Serious problems continue to persist, and
237 I wonder how much you are truly dedicating to combating
238 these actions. What actions are you taking to educate
239 Americans about the dangers of using your site, especially
240 the dangers for kids?

241 As ranking member of the Subcommittee on Communications
242 and Technology, we have oversight of any change made to
243 Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act. Section 230
244 provides you with liability protection for content
245 moderation decisions made in good faith. Based on recent
246 actions, however, it is clear that in your definition of
247 good faith, moderation includes censoring viewpoints you
248 disagree with and establishing a faux independent appeals
249 process that doesn't make its content moderation decisions
250 based on American principles of free expression. I find
251 that highly concerning.

252 I look forward to today's hearing as an important step
253 in reconsidering the extent to which Big Tech deserves to
254 retain the significant liability protection. And with that,
255 Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

256 *Mr. Doyle. Thank you. The gentleman yields back.

257 The chair now recognizes Chair Schakowsky, chair of the
258 Subcommittee on Consumer Protection and Commerce, for five
259 minutes for her opening statement.

260 *Ms. Schakowsky. Thank you. It is a pleasure to co-
261 chair this meeting with you.

262 I want to welcome our witnesses and thank them for
263 coming. It is not an exaggeration to say that your
264 companies have fundamentally and permanently transformed our
265 very culture and our understanding of the world. Much of
266 this is for good, but it is also true that our country, our
267 democracy, even our understanding of what is truth has been
268 harmed by the proliferation and dissemination of
269 misinformation and extremism, all of which has deeply
270 divided us.

271 What our witnesses today need to take away from this
272 hearing is that self-regulation has come to the end of its
273 road, and that this democracy, this democratic -- the people
274 that you see before you, elected by the people, is preparing
275 to move forth with legislation and regulation.

276 The regulation that we seek should not attempt to limit
277 constitutionally protected freedom of speech, but it must
278 hold platforms accountable when they are used to incite
279 violence and hatred or, as in the case of the COVID pandemic,
280 spread misinformation that costs thousands of lives.

281 All three of the companies that are here today run
282 platforms that are hotbeds of misinformation and
283 disinformation. And despite all the promises and new
284 policies to match, disinformation was rampant in the 2020

285 election, especially targeting vulnerable communities. For
286 example, Spanish language ads run by the Trump campaign
287 falsely accused President Biden of being endorsed by
288 Venezuelan President Maduro.

289 The spread of disinformation fed upon itself until it
290 arrived at the Capitol of the United States on January 6th,
291 which cost five lives. The lives lost in the insurgency were
292 not the first cases of these platforms' failure, nor even the
293 worst. In 2018, Facebook admitted a genocide of the Rohingya
294 people in Myanmar was planned and executed on Facebook.

295 2020 saw the rise of coronavirus disinformation on
296 Facebook platforms, including the playing of the -- they
297 called it "The Plandemic.'" This film got 1.8 million views
298 and 150,000 shares before it was removed. Disinformation
299 like Plandemic made people skeptical of the need for vaccines
300 and almost certainly cost -- contributed to the horrible loss
301 of life during the pandemic. Disinformation also hops
302 platforms to spread viruses. Disinformation also hops from
303 platform to platform. The Plandemic actually was first on
304 YouTube before it was on Facebook and Instagram and Twitter.

305 Misinformation regarding the election dropped 73 percent
306 across social media platforms after Twitter permanently
307 suspended Trump as well as -- and also the Capitol insurgency
308 and QAnon.

309 But the question really is: What took so long? The

310 witnesses here today have demonstrated time and time again
311 that they do not -- that self-regulation has not worked.
312 They must be held accountable for allowing disinformation and
313 misinformation to spread. And that is why I will be
314 introducing the Online Consumer Protection Act, which I hope
315 will earn bipartisan support. And thank you. I will yield
316 back.

317 *Mr. Doyle. The gentlelady yields back.

318 The chair now recognizes Mr. Bilirakis, ranking member
319 for the Subcommittee on Consumer Protection and Commerce, for
320 five minutes for his opening remarks.

321 *Mr. Bilirakis. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate
322 it. Thank you for participating in today's hearing, all the
323 witnesses and the members.

324 I have been thinking about this hearing since our side
325 first requested this hearing last year. My time in college
326 has provided me enough knowledge about the history of the
327 committee to know what the Telecommunications Act was and,
328 importantly, what it wasn't. Components of that law have
329 been struck down by the courts, while other provisions are
330 interpreted and applied differently than first conceived.
331 This is all a departure from congressional intent.

332 Regardless of what one thinks of whether all of the
333 Communications Decency Act was the right approach, the same
334 members that voted for Section 230 voted for that entire

385 us want to damage entrepreneurs. What I do want to hear is
386 what you will do to bring our country back from the fringes
387 and stop the poisonous practices that drive depression,
388 isolation, and suicide, and instead cooperate with law
389 enforcement to protect our citizens.

390 Our kids are being lost while you say you will try to do
391 better, as we have heard countless time already. We need
392 true transparency and real change. We need, again, not empty
393 promises from you, and we have heard that over and over
394 again. The fear you should have coming into this hearing
395 today isn't that you are going to get upbraided by a Member
396 of Congress. It is that our committee knows how to get
397 things done when we come together. We can do this with you
398 or without you. And we will.

399 Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield back.

400 *Mr. Doyle. The gentleman yields back.

401 The chair now recognizes Mr. Pallone, chairman of the
402 full committee, for five minutes for his opening statement.

403 *The Chairman. Thank you, Chairman Doyle and
404 Schakowsky, for this very important hearing. We are here
405 today because the spread of disinformation and extremism has
406 been growing online, particularly on social media, where
407 there are little to no guardrails in place to stop it.

408 And unfortunately, this disinformation and extremism
409 doesn't just stay online. It has real-world, often dangerous

410 and even violent, consequences. And the time has come to
411 hold online platforms accountable for their part in the rise
412 of disinformation and extremism.

413 According to a survey conducted by Pew earlier this
414 month, 30 percent of Americans are still hesitant or simply
415 do not want to take the COVID-19 vaccine. On January 6, our
416 Nation's Capitol was violently attacked. This month,
417 Homeland Security Secretary Mayorkas identified domestic
418 violent extremism as the "greatest threat" to the United
419 States. And crimes against Asian Americans have risen by
420 nearly 150 percent since the beginning of the COVID-19
421 pandemic.

422 Five years ago, during the 2016 Presidential elections,
423 Facebook, Google, and Twitter were warned about -- but simply
424 ignored -- their platforms' role in spreading disinformation.
425 And since then, the warnings have continued but the problem has
426 only gotten worse.

427 Only after public outrage and pressure did these
428 companies make inadequate attempts to appease critics and
429 lawmakers. But despite the public rebuke, Wall Street
430 continued to reward the companies' strategy to promote
431 misinformation and disinformation by driving their stock prices
432 even higher.

433 And now, despite repeated promises to seriously tackle
434 this crisis, Facebook, Google, and Twitter instead routinely

435 make minor changes to their policies in response to the public
436 relations crisis of the day. And they will change some
437 underlying internal policy that may or may not be related to
438 the problem. But that is it. The underlying problem remains.

439 So Mr. Chairman, it is now painfully clear that neither
440 the market nor public pressure will force these social media
441 companies to take the aggressive action they need to take to
442 eliminate disinformation and extremism from their platforms.
443 And, therefore, it is time for Congress and this committee to
444 legislate and realign these companies' incentives.

445 Today our laws give these companies and their leaders a
446 blank check to do nothing. Rather than limit the spread of
447 disinformation, Facebook, Google, and Twitter have created
448 business models that exploit the human brain's preference for
449 divisive content to get Americans hooked on their platform, at
450 the expense of the public interest.

451 It isn't just that social media companies are allowing
452 disinformation to spread -- it is that, in many cases, they are
453 actively amplifying and spreading it themselves. And fines, to
454 the extent they are levied at all, have simply become the cost
455 of doing business.

456 The dirty truth is that they are relying on algorithms to
457 purposefully promote conspiratorial, divisive, or extremist
458 content so they can take more money in ad dollars. And this is
459 because the more outrageous and extremist the content, the more

460 engagement and views these companies get from their users. And
461 more views equal more money, Mr. Chairman. That is what it is
462 all about, more money.

463 It is crucial to understand that these companies aren't
464 just mere bystanders -- they are playing an active role in the
465 meteoric rise of disinformation and extremism because they make
466 money on it. So when a company is actually promoting this
467 harmful content, I question whether existing liability
468 protections should apply.

469 Members on this Committee have suggested legislative
470 solutions and introduced bills. The Committee is going to
471 consider all these options so that we can finally align the
472 interests of these companies with the interests of the public
473 and hold the platforms and their CEOs accountable when they
474 stray.

475 That is why you are here today, Mr. Zuckerberg,
476 Mr. Pichai, and Mr. Dorsey. You have failed to meaningfully
477 change after your platforms played a role in fomenting
478 insurrection, in abetting the spread the virus, and trampling
479 Americans civil liberties.

480 And while it may be true that some bad actors will shout
481 fire in a crowded theater, by promoting harmful content, your
482 platforms are handing them a megaphone to be heard in every
483 theater across the country and the world. Your business model
484 itself has become the problem.

1576 something that we try to study, and I am --

1577 *Ms. Rodgers. Can you say yes or no? I am sorry.

1578 *Mr. Zuckerberg. I believe the answer is yes.

1579 *Ms. Rodgers. Okay. Mr. Doyle, has Twitter?

1580 *Mr. Dorsey. I don't believe so, but we will follow up
1581 with you.

1582 *Ms. Rodgers. Okay. Mr. Pichai, has Google conducted
1583 any research on the effect your products are having on the
1584 mental health of children?

1585 *Mr. Pichai. We consult widely with expert third
1586 parties on this area, including SAMHSA and other mental
1587 health organizations, and invest a lot of time and effort in
1588 this area.

1589 *Ms. Rodgers. Okay. I would like to see that. It
1590 sounds like you have studied extremism. Let's get focused on
1591 our children.

1592 *Mr. Doyle. The gentlelady's time is expired.

1593 The chair now recognizes Mr. Rush for five minutes.
1594 Bobby, you need to unmute. There you go. Nope, you are
1595 still muted.

1596 *Mr. Rush. I want to thank you, Mr. Chairman. We all
1597 agree that social media sites should not be tools for stoking
1598 racial division or exacerbating racial injustice. However,
1599 there is a broad finding of research that demonstrates the
1600 disproportionate effects of disinformation and white

1601 supremacy extremism on women and people of color, especially
1602 black people.

1603 We have seen, and continue to see, that too often social
1604 media sites put their earnings before equality. Simply
1605 stated, your corporations carelessly put profits over people.
1606 Misinformation, outlandish conspiracy theories, and
1607 incendiary content targeting minorities remains firmly, and
1608 social media companies, your companies, are profiting from
1609 hate and racism on these platforms by harnessing data and
1610 generating advertising revenue from such content.

1611 There is only one comparison that remotely approaches
1612 the avarice and moral discrepancy of your companies, and that
1613 is the slavetocracy burden of our Nation's shameful and
1614 inhumane and most difficult dark days in the past.

1615 This is the very reason why I ask Mr. Dorsey, I remember
1616 you at our 2018 hearing to commit to commissioning and
1617 independent third party civil rights audit of Twitter. This
1618 response at the hearing was followed up with a joint letter
1619 from Chairman Pallone and myself confirming that commitment.

1620 It is three years later, and I am still waiting,
1621 Mr. Dorsey, for the results of that audit. Where is that
1622 audit, Mr. Dorsey?

1623 *Mr. Dorsey. Thank you. We have taken another
1624 approach, which is to work with civil rights orgs on a
1625 regular basis. We have regular conversations with civil

1626 rights orgs multiple times a year.

1627 *Mr. Rush. Mr. Dorsey, where is the audit that Members
1628 of Congress, including the chairman of the committee -- where
1629 is the audit that we asked you and you agreed to forward?

1630 *Mr. Dorsey. We don't have it. We sought a different
1631 approach with --

1632 *Mr. Rush. I don't have it, either, and I thought that
1633 you were being very, very disingenuous. As a matter of fact,
1634 I thought that you had lied to the committee and you should
1635 be condemned for that. And I can't wait until we come up
1636 with legislation that will deal with you and your cohorts in
1637 a very, very effective way. This was nothing but an empty
1638 promise that you made.

1639 You haven't taken this issue seriously, and Mr. Dorsey I
1640 as a black man in America, my experiences are different from
1641 your experiences. This audit is very, very important to me
1642 and to those who are similarly situated just as I am.
1643 Facebook, to their credit, has completed an audit. And there
1644 is no reason, simply no reason under the sun, that
1645 corporation as large as yours should not have completed that
1646 audit.

1647 Mr. Dorsey, has Twitter evaluated the disparate impact
1648 from COVID-19 misinformation on the African American
1649 community, and simply has not even attempted to identify
1650 messages to combat COVID-19 misinformation targeted at

1651 African Americans and emphasized reliable, trustworthy
1652 medical information?

1653 *Mr. Dorsey. Yes on both. And we review with civil
1654 rights orgs on a regular basis. That is the solution we
1655 chose.

1656 *Mr. Doyle. The gentleman's time is expired.
1657 The chair now recognizes Mr. Upton for five minutes.

1658 *Mr. Upton. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

1659 As I listen to this hearing, like it or not, it sounds
1660 like everybody on both sides of the aisle is not very happy.
1661 I think we all believe that there is a lot of responsibility
1662 that should be shared for some of the issues that we have
1663 raised today by the three of you. And I would just offer --
1664 or speculate, I guess you could say -- that we are going to
1665 see some changes in Section 230.

1666 The President, former President Trump, vetoed a pretty
1667 big bill, the defense bill, earlier last year over this very
1668 issue because he wanted the total repeal and he didn't get
1669 it. But I know that the Senate now has got some legislation
1670 that is pending that is looking at a couple reforms. And my
1671 sense is that we may see something here in the near future as
1672 well.

1673 I serve as one of only two House members on the
1674 Commission on Combating Synthetic Opioid Trafficking. It is
1675 a multi-Federal agency. It is co-chaired by David Trone in

1815 fear, anxiety, anger, and that includes deadly, deadly
1816 misinformation.

1817 The Center for Countering Digital Hate found that the
1818 "Explore" and "Suggested Posts" parts of Instagram are
1819 littered with COVID misinformation, election disinformation,
1820 and QAnon posts. So this is dangerous, and it is why
1821 Representative Schakowsky and I are doing a bill that is
1822 going to ban this business model of surveillance advertising.

1823 So are you willing to redesign your products to
1824 eliminate your focus on addicting users to your platforms at
1825 all costs? Yes or no?

1826 *Mr. Zuckerberg. Congresswoman, as I said before, the
1827 teams that design our algorithm --

1828 *Ms. Eshoo. Never mind. I think -- let me just say
1829 this, and I think it is irritating all of us, and that is
1830 that no one seems to know the word "yes" or the word "no."
1831 Which one is it? If you don't want to answer, just say, "I
1832 don't want to answer." So yes or no?

1833 *Mr. Zuckerberg. Congressman, these are nuanced issues
1834 and --

1835 *Ms. Eshoo. Okay. So I am going to say that is a no.

1836 To Mr. Doyle, as chairwoman of the Health Subcommittee,
1837 I think that you need to eliminate all COVID misinformation
1838 and not label or reduce its spread but remove it. I looked
1839 at a tweet this morning. Robert Kennedy, Jr. links the death

1840 of baseball legend Hank Aaron to the COVID vaccine even
1841 though fact-checkers debunked the story. The tweet has 9,000
1842 retweets.

1843 Will you take this down, and why haven't you? And also,
1844 why haven't you banned the 12 accounts that are spewing its
1845 deadly COVID misinformation? This could cost lives.

1846 *Mr. Dorsey. No, we won't take it down because it
1847 didn't violate our policy. So we have a clear policy in
1848 place --

1849 *Ms. Eshoo. What kind of policy is that? Is it a
1850 policy for misinformation?

1851 *Mr. Dorsey. No.

1852 *Mr. Doyle. The gentlelady's time is expired.
1853 The chair recognizes Mr. Scalise. Is Mr. Scalise here?

1854 *Mr. Scalise. Thank you.

1855 *Mr. Doyle. Ah, there we go.

1856 *Mr. Scalise. Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to
1857 thank you for having this hearing. I want to thank our three
1858 witnesses for coming as well. Clearly, you are seeing a lot
1859 of concern being expressed by members on both sides, both
1860 Republican and Democrat, about the way that your social media
1861 platforms are run, and especially as it relates to the
1862 fairness and equal treatment of people.

1863 I know I have had a lot of concerns; shared it with some
1864 of you individually over the last few years about whether it

3559 ongoing right now. According to the National Center on
3560 Sexual Exploitation, a teenage boy, a victim of child sex
3561 trafficking, had images of his abuse posted on Twitter. One
3562 of those videos went viral, and he became the target of
3563 bullying to the point of being suicidal. He contacted you to
3564 alert you that his sex abuse images were on your platform.
3565 You failed to take them down. His mother contacted you to
3566 alert you, and again you failed to take them down.

3567 They called the police and they followed up with you
3568 with a police report. Your support center told the family
3569 that after review, the illegal video was not a violation of
3570 your terms of service. In the meantime, the illegal video
3571 accrued over 167,000 views.

3572 It took a threat from a Homeland Security agent to Get
3573 Twitter to take down the video. Even then you took no action
3574 against the accounts that were sharing it and continue to
3575 share sexually explicit videos of minors in clear violation
3576 of the law and in clear violation of your duties under
3577 Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act, as they were
3578 passed.

3579 So in the eyes of Twitter, it is better to be a
3580 pedophile pornographer, a woke racist, or a state sponsor of
3581 terror than it is to be a conservative, even a conservative
3582 President. You have abused the Section 230 liability shield
3583 we gave you to protect children, and used it to silence

3584 conservatives instead.

3585 As we have heard today, your abuses of your privilege
3586 are far too numerous to be explained away and far too serious
3587 to ignore. So it is time for your liability shield to be
3588 removed. Your immunity shield and the immunity shield of
3589 other woke companies who choose to score political points
3590 with their immunity shields rather than protect children.

3591 My colleagues have been asking you if you deserve to
3592 continue to receive immunity under Section 230. Let me
3593 answer the question for you. No, you don't. You all think
3594 you do, but you don't because you continue to do a disservice
3595 to that law and its intent.

3596 The United States constitution has the First Amendment,
3597 and that should be your guide. Protecting the speech of
3598 users of your platform instead of trading them in like
3599 hostages and forcing things through algorithms to lead them
3600 down a path.

3601 The American people really are tired of you abusing your
3602 rights, abandoning their values. So one of the Christian
3603 leaders that you banned, Mr. Dorsey, had as her last post a
3604 scripture verse that you took down. And I want to leave it
3605 here today, Psalm 34:14. Depart from evil and do good. See
3606 peace and pursue it. Rather than silence that wise advice, I
3607 strongly suggest that you follow it.

3608 Now, I have heard a lot of stuff on this hearing today

3609 about 230 protections. I challenge my colleagues to really
3610 get serious about doing something about this liability shield
3611 so that we do have a fair and free internet and people aren't
3612 censored.

3613 With that, Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

3614 *Mr. Doyle. The gentleman's time is expired.

3615 The chair recognizes Ms. Kelly for five minutes.

3616 *Ms. Kelly. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you to the
3617 witnesses who are testifying today.

3618 The business model for your platforms is quite simple:
3619 Keep users engaged. The more time people spend on social
3620 media, the more data harvested and targeted ads sold. To
3621 building that engagement, social media platforms amplify
3622 content that gets attention. That can be cat videos or
3623 vacation pictures, but too often it means content that is
3624 incendiary, contains conspiracy theories or violence.

3625 Algorithms in your platforms can actively funnel users
3626 from the mainstream to the fringe, subjecting users to more
3627 extreme content, all to maintain user engagement. This is a
3628 fundamental flaw in your business model that mere warning
3629 labels, temporary suspension of some accounts, and even
3630 content moderation cannot address. And your company's
3631 insatiable desire to maintain user engagement will continue
3632 to give such content a safe haven if doing so improves your
3633 bottom line.

4444 disinformation campaigns that specifically targeted American
4445 service members and victims. I am just curious if you know
4446 how many public groups with the word "veteran" or public
4447 pages with the word "veteran" did you remove from your
4448 platform after January 6th in association with misinformation
4449 about the 2020 election or the attack on the Capitol?

4450 *Mr. Zuckerberg. Congresswoman, I don't know the answer
4451 off the top of my head, but I would be happy to get back to
4452 you with that.

4453 *Miss Rice. Thank you. We believe that you should be
4454 tracking that information. Your platform was in fact a crime
4455 scene after January 6, and we need that information and data
4456 to understand how the attack happened.

4457 I want to thank all three of you for coming here today
4458 and spending so much time with us. I yield back,
4459 Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

4460 *Mr. Doyle. The gentlelady yields back.

4461 The chair recognizes Mr. Armstrong for five minutes. Is
4462 Mr. Armstrong here? You need to unmute, Kelly.

4463 *Mr. Armstrong. All right. Sorry about that. Can you
4464 hear me?

4465 *Mr. Doyle. Yes. We can hear you.

4466 *Mr. Armstrong. All right. Thank you.

4467 No other industry receives such bipartisan scrutiny --
4468 disinformation, content moderation, de-platforming,

4719 try eventually?

4720 *Mr. Zuckerberg. Congresswoman, if what you are asking
4721 is are we ever going to be perfect, the answer is no. I
4722 think that there will always be some mistakes, but I think we
4723 will get increasingly accurate over time. So for example, a
4724 few years back, we identified --

4725 *Ms. Craig. Mr. Zuckerberg, I only have a couple of
4726 minutes or one minutes left, so I am going to continue here.

4727 As has been mentioned repeatedly throughout today, we
4728 just don't have faith that your companies have the proper
4729 incentives to proactively contemplate and address basic human
4730 rights. With that in mind, would you support legislation
4731 requiring social media companies to have an Office of Civil
4732 Rights reporting to the CEO, and that would mean you would
4733 have to reconsider your corporate structure, including the
4734 civil rights and human rights of the trans community?

4735 *Mr. Zuckerberg. Congresswoman, we took the
4736 unprecedented step of hiring a VP of civil rights, and I
4737 think we are one of the only companies that has done
4738 something similar to what you are saying.

4739 *Ms. Craig. Well, I hope that you do better, then,
4740 because this example I am giving you was completely
4741 unacceptable. This panel has done something truly rare in
4742 Washington these days: It has united Democrats and
4743 Republicans. Your industry cannot be trusted to regulate

4744 itself.

4745 And with that, I yield back.

4746 *Mr. Doyle. The gentlelady yields back.

4747 The chair now recognizes Mrs. Trahan for five minutes.

4748 *Mrs. Trahan. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

4749 I would like to turn the focus back to our children. My
4750 husband and I have five. Our oldest is 27, our youngest is
4751 6, and over the years I have noticed how technology has been
4752 increasingly designed to capture their attention. The more
4753 time my first-grader spends scrolling through an app, the
4754 less time she is playing outside or enjoying face-to-face
4755 interactions with us.

4756 Google and Facebook are not only doing a poor job of
4757 keeping our children under 13 off of YouTube and Instagram,
4758 as my colleagues have already mentioned today, but you are
4759 actively onboarding our children onto your ecosystems with
4760 apps like YouTube Kids, Facebook Messenger Kids, and now we
4761 are hearing Instagram for Kids. These applications introduce
4762 our children to social media far too early and include
4763 manipulative design features intended to keep them hooked.

4764 Mr. Pichai, when a child finishes a video on YouTube or
4765 YouTube Kids, does the next video automatically play by
4766 default? And I think this one is a yes or no.

4767 *Mr. Pichai. Sorry, I was muted. Congresswoman, I have
4768 children, too. I worry about the time they spend online, and

4869 19 pandemic to the January 6 insurrection, both of which we
4870 have talked about extensively.

4871 We have seen that the real-world cost of this unchecked
4872 spread of disinformation is in lies. And like my colleagues,
4873 I worry that the structure of many social media companies,
4874 including those we have before us today, prioritize
4875 engagement, including engagement with provocative or
4876 extremist content over responsible corporate citizenship.

4877 So one of my greatest concerns regarding how extremist
4878 content and disinformation is allowed to spread on your
4879 platform is the lack of data transparency when it comes to
4880 independent analysis. Now, everyone has claimed they have an
4881 internal system, that it is about the systems, that you need
4882 good systems to remove and delete disinformation and
4883 extremist content.

4884 But we have no way to verify how effective those systems
4885 are. And that is a huge part of the challenge before us. I
4886 think we all would agree that we need data and information to
4887 make good policy and to write good legislation, which will be
4888 coming out of this committee.

4889 So that brings me to a follow-up on my colleague Miss
4890 Rice's questions about data. As she mentioned, and it is my
4891 understanding that all three of your platforms chose to
4892 remove content that was posted regarding the Capitol
4893 insurrection on January 6. And I think we can all understand

5569 See, they know you have this power and they want to direct
5570 that power for their own political gain. Mr. Zuckerberg,
5571 since Facebook was my first love, I am going to direct
5572 questions at you. And this isn't a trick question, I
5573 promise.

5574 Do you believe in the spirit of the First Amendment --
5575 free speech, robust debate, basically liberal values?

5576 *Mr. Zuckerberg. Yes, absolutely.

5577 *Mr. Crenshaw. See, my colleagues can't infringe on the
5578 First Amendment. The American people in their speech are
5579 protected from government, as they should be. My colleagues,
5580 this administration, they can't silence pump they disagree
5581 with no matter how much they want to.

5582 But I do think they want to. Just in this hearing, I
5583 have heard Democrats complain about misinformation, by which
5584 they clearly mean political speech they disagree with. They
5585 have complained today that Prager University content is still
5586 up. I have heard them accuse conservative veterans of being
5587 tinfoil hat-wearing extremists, and that opinions on climate
5588 change that they disagree with should be taken down.

5589 This is quite different from the Republican complaint
5590 that illegal content needs to be addressed. There is a
5591 growing number of people in this country that don't believe
5592 in the liberal values of free speech and free debate. I
5593 promise you, the death of the First Amendment will come when